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Federal Communications Commission
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau
Washington, D.C. 20554

CGB

February 20, 2013

John Greenwald, Jr.
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

FOIA No. 2013-145

Dear Mr. Greenwald:

This letter responds to your recent Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") request received by the Federal Communications Commission (the "FCC or "Commission") and assigned to the Consumer & Governmental Affairs ("CGB") and Enforcement ("EB") Bureaus. Your request seeks copies of "complaints regarding the following television series/program (For the calendar year 2012 through the date of [your] letter): Piers Morgan Tonight on CNN."

CGB conducted a search of the databases in which we maintain the records of informal complaints filed by, of on behalf of, consumers. Our search revealed 17 documents that are responsive to your request, which are enclosed. EB informed CGB that a search of its records identified no responsive documents.

Mr. Hennigan redacted all personal identifying information relating to the individuals who submitted or are named in the enclosed complaints or inquiries based on Exemption 6 of FOIA, which permits agencies not to disclose files that would clearly invade personal privacy.¹ Mr. Hennigan also redacted some FCC employee names based on Exemption 2 of FOIA, which permits agencies not to disclose internal personnel rules and practices.²

The FCC receives many complaints and comments that do not involve violations of the Communications Act or any FCC rule or order. Thus, a complaint or comment does not necessarily indicate any wrongdoing by any individuals or entities named in the complaint or comment.

¹ 5 U.S.C. § 552 (b)(6); *see also* 47 C.F.R. § 0.457(f).

² 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(2); *see also* 47 C.F.R. § 0.457(b).

FOIA and FCC rules require the FCC to charge requesters for time spent searching for and reviewing responsive documents, and for copying them.³ Based on your classification as a representative of the "news media," you are responsible only for the payment of duplication costs beyond the first 100 pages. There is no duplication cost associated with processing your request.

If you think this response denies your FOIA request, you may file an application for review of this decision with the FCC's Office of the General Counsel within 30 days.⁴ Both the application and envelope containing it must be marked "Review of Freedom of Information Action" and the application should refer to FOIA Control No. 2013-145.

Sincerely,



Nancy Stevenson
Deputy Chief
Consumer Policy Division
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau

Enclosures

³ 5 U.S.C. §552(a)(4)(A)(i); 47 C.F.R. § 0.470.

⁴ 47 C.F.R. § 0.461(j).

Form Type	2000E - Media (General) Complaint		
Complaint Number	12-C00451291-1	Complaint Source	Web
Date Received	12/20/2012	Attachments	No
Category	Other	Subcategory	Comments
Complainant Information			
Company			
Address			
City/State/Zip	Katy	TX	77450
Complaint Information			
Company	CNN Broadcast company, Atanta, Ga		
Call Sign	CNN	TV Channel	
City/State/Zip			
Comments	<p>Note I am central time and the show was 8pm Central time and 9pm Eastern time. Piers Morgan broke the fairness and bias rules. He tried to comply with these rules by inviting a balance of guests pro and con to the gun issue. But he talked over and cut off and changed questions and harassed guests whose opinion he did not like. He "ran over like a truck" guests whose answered he did not like by being a person who raised his voice the loudest over certain guests and cut them off and changed questions, and did not allow guests to complete answers. Clearly he showed bias and clearly his balanced guests where a sham compliance to federal rules.</p>		

Form Type	2000E - Media (General) Complaint		
Complaint Number	12-C00451292-1	Complaint Source	Web
Date Received	12/20/2012	Attachments	Yes
Category	Programming	Subcategory	Content Criticism
Complainant Information			
Company			
Address			
City/State/Zip	Spokane	WA	99207
Complaint Information			
Company	Cable News Network (CNN)		
Call Sign	CNN	TV Channel	CNN -35
City/State/Zip	Atlanta	GA	
Comments	<p>Unauthorized, unfair, biased, illegal broadcasts (does NOT include Obscene, Profane or Indecent material):</p> <p>Piers Morgan of the Piers Morgan Show on CNN interviewed Larry Pratt/Exec. Dir. of Gun Owners of America on his evening show. Mr. Morgan was hostile toward Mr. Pratt; while Mr. Pratt upheld his professionalism and social etiquette. Mr. Piers Morgan continually interrupted Mr. Pratt with such adjectives as "You're unbelievably stupid aren't you?", "...it's idiots like you." In summary, Mr. Piers Morgan, an employee of CNN, and his show and words endorsed by CNN were unfair and biased, as per the interview with Mr. Larry Pratt/Exec. Dir. of Gun Owners of America.</p> <p>Here's the video interview link: http://www.cnn.com/video/#/video/us/2012/12/19/pmt-bts-pratt-gun-control-debate.cnn</p>		

Form Type	2000E - Media (General) Complaint		
Complaint Number	12-C00454324-1	Complaint Source	Web
Date Received	12/28/2012	Attachments	No
Category	Programming	Subcategory	Content Criticism
Complainant Information			
Company			
Address			
City/State/Zip	Negaunee	MI	49866
Complaint Information			
Company	CNN		
Call Sign	CNN	TV Channel	
City/State/Zip			
Comments	<p>When Piers Morgan interviewed Rick Warren, he was attacking the Christian religion by calling the Bible flawed. This is religious bias and I find it very offensive. It is inappropriate for any broadcaster to try to belittle any religion over another. He was also offensive in calling the constitution of the United States flawed. That is a subversive statement to the values of our country.</p>		

Form Type	2000G		
Complaint Number	13-C00458719-1	Complaint Source	Web
Date Received	01/07/2013	Attachments	No
Category	Programming	Subcategory	Loud Commercials
Complainant Information			
Company			
Address			
City/State/Zip	Elmwood Park	NJ	07407
Complaint Information			
Company			
Call Sign		TV Channel	
City/State/Zip			
Comments	Arnold Schwarzenegger re-broadcast This commercial ad was literally two times as loud as the normal program-Piers Morgan Tonight. Channel 600.		

Form Type	2000E - Media (General) Complaint		
Complaint Number	13-C00459553-1	Complaint Source	Web
Date Received	01/09/2013	Attachments	Yes
Category		Subcategory	
Complainant Information			
Company			
Address			
City/State/Zip	Winamac	IN	46996
Complaint Information			
Company	Time Warner Inc.		
Call Sign	CNN	TV Channel	202
City/State/Zip	New York City	NY	
Comments	<p>On 01/08/2013 Piers Morgan Tonight, guest Buzz Bissinger was on national television calling for the baiting and shooting of another talk show host Alex Jones. Buzz Bissinger said, I dont care what the justification is that youre allowed in this country to own a semi-automatic weapon much less a handgun. But what do you need a semi-automatic weapon for? The only reason I think youd need it is, Piers, challenge Alex Jones to a boxing match, show up with a semi-automatic that you got legally and pop him.. Abby Huntsman then said, I'd love to see that in uniform.. Followed by the talk show host Piers Morgan also advocated this intention by stating, I'll borrow my brothers uniform.. I am a advocate of the first amendment however, it is clear that in the United States of America and FCC laws state making this kind of suggestive remarks and calling for the shooting of another is against the law.</p>		

Form Type	2000E - Media (General) Complaint		
Complaint Number	13-C00459717-1	Complaint Source	Web
Date Received	01/09/2013	Attachments	No
Category	Programming	Subcategory	Change
Complainant Information			
Company			
Address			
City/State/Zip	Choctaw	OK	73020
Complaint Information			
Company	Cable News Network		
Call Sign		TV Channel	
City/State/Zip			
Comments	<p>I was shocked to hear Buzz Bissinger conspire with Piers Morgan ON AIR to kill Alex Jones, a gun rights activist who had stood up to Piers Morgan the previous day on his show. The other guest, Abby Huntsman, urged Piers Morgan to commit the crime IN UNIFORM as she laughed. Piers Morgan agreed that he would commit the crime in "his brother's uniform". I couldn't believe my eyes at what I was watching on television! How is it the programs can't use four letter words, but they can conspire to murder someone with no consequence? I want a response from you about this, because if you refuse to take action I plan to file a complaint with the Attorney General in the state where this physical threat was made.</p>		

Form Type	2000E - Media (General) Complaint		
Complaint Number	13-C00459822-1	Complaint Source	Web
Date Received	01/09/2013	Attachments	No
Category	Programming	Subcategory	Content Criticism
Complainant Information			
Company			
Address			
City/State/Zip	Kapolei	HI	96707
Complaint Information			
Company	CNN		
Call Sign		TV Channel	
City/State/Zip			
Comments	<p>CNN broadcast on the Piers Morgan show this week a call to shoot Alex Jones. You can see this on the video link below. The guest on the show calling for the murder was Buzz Bissinger. CNN needs to be fined and have their license taken away immediately for broadcasting calls to murder people. This Buzz Bissinger clown needs to be jailed.</p> <p>Piers Morgan Panel Fantasize About Killing Alex Jones</p> <p>http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-5vfPpFE_c&sns=tw</p>		

Form Type	2000G		
Complaint Number	13-C00460380-1	Complaint Source	Web
Date Received	01/10/2013	Attachments	No
Category	Programming	Subcategory	Loud Commercials
Complainant Information			
Company			
Address			
City/State/Zip	Redlands	CA	92373
Complaint Information			
Company			
Call Sign		TV Channel	
City/State/Zip			
Comments	It may have been a local break away spot, not CNN, but it was definitely louder than the Piers Morgan talk show audio.		

Form Type	2000E - Media (General) Complaint		
Complaint Number	13-C00460719-1	Complaint Source	Web
Date Received	01/11/2013	Attachments	No
Category	Programming	Subcategory	Content Criticism
Complainant Information			
Company			
Address			
City/State/Zip	Portland	OH	45770
Complaint Information			
Company	CNN, Time Warner		
Call Sign		TV Channel	
City/State/Zip			
Comments	<p>On Piers Morgan Tonight aired by CNN Mr. Morgan and his panelists: Gloria Allred, H.G. Bissinger, and Abby Huntsman laughed and joked about shooting a United States Citizen with a semi-auto rifle. Here is the transcription: . Mr. Bissinger said: I dont care what the justification is that youre allowed in this country to own a semi-automatic weapon much less a handgun. But what do you need a semi-automatic weapon for? The only reason I think youd need it is, Piers, challenge Alex Jones to a boxing match, show up with a semi-automatic that you got legally and pop him. Abby Huntsman (Huffington Post Employee) then says: Id love to see that [laughter] in uniform. Piers Morgan then says: Ill borrow my brothers uniform. This is not only disgusting, but a federal offense according to the FBI.GOV website if you look up Federal Civil Rights Statute:Title 18, U.S.C., Section 241 Conspiracy Against Rights. I demand a full investigation into these so called journalists actions.</p>		

Case Information

Control ID : CIMS00003547977	IC Number : 13-WB15106719	Submission Method : Web	Status : Pending Analyst Review
Level One :	Level Two :	Level Three :	Assigned Code Acronym :
Owner Rep Number : PCC66	Creator : cgb.475	Problem Submitted Time : 1/11/2013 7:56:11AM	Date Closed :

Contact Information

Consumer Personal Information Omitted

City/State/ZipCode : CROSS JUNCTION VA 22625

Indecency

Date of Program : 01/11/2013	Call Sign/Channel/Frequency : 105.9
Time of Program : 7:20 am	City/State of Program : Ashburn VA
Network : WMAL	Program Type :
Name of Program/DJ/Personality/Song/Film : Brian and Larry show	

Problem Description

These 2 men were taking calls regarding the Piers Morgan show on CNN discussing the gun control debate. They were insulting Piers Morgan and clearly stated as if speaking to him "You're an asshole". I am unsure which man actually said it. He quickly said "Oh did we dump that?" and the other one said "Ya" but there was no censor, it rang out loud and clear. For a supposed Christian programming station to allow such behavior is unconscionable. This station claims to promote moral values and then uses language like that at a time in the morning when parents are probably listening with kids in the car?

Case Information

Control ID : CIMS00003546108	IC Number : 13-WB15106642	Submission Method : Web	Status : Pending Analyst Review
Level One :	Level Two :	Level Three :	Assigned Code Acronym :
Owner Rep Number : TSR29	Creator : cgb.475	Problem Submitted Time : 1/9/2013 10:31:55PM	Date Closed :

Contact Information

Consumer Personal Information Omitted

City/State/ZipCode : MONROE CITY IN 47557

Indecency

Date of Program : 01/09/2013	Call Sign/Channel/Frequency : internet
Time of Program : 09:00 PM	City/State of Program : monroe city indiana
Network : CNN	Program Type :
Name of Program/DJ/Personality/Song/Film : Buzz Bissinger/Piers Morgan	

Problem Description

On tonights broadcasting of Piers Morgans show, Buzz Bizzinger told Piers Morgan he should invite Alex Jones to a boxing match and shoot him with a semi-automatic weapon.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UT1m05vJoS4>

This is not acceptable rhetoric due to the seriousness of the issue. He is advocating people to commit murder that share an opposing view on a legitimate news network.

Case Information

Control ID : CIMS00003536931	IC Number : 12-WB15105166	Submission Method : Web	Status : Pending Analyst Review
Level One :	Level Two :	Level Three :	Assigned Code Acronym :
Owner Rep Number : TSR29	Creator : cgb.475	Problem Submitted Time : 12/20/2012 5:13:47AM	Date Closed :

Contact Information

Consumer Personal Information Omitted

City/State/ZipCode : KANSAS CITY MO 64111

Indecency

Date of Program : 6/22/12
Time of Program : 14:00
Network : Time Warner Cable
Name of Program/DJ/Personality/Song/Film :
woman newscaster, midday

Call Sign/Channel/Frequency : CNN Channel 44
City/State of Program : Kansas City, MO
Program Type :

Problem Description

Awomand newscaster came on interviewing notable people after the Supreme Court decision on the Affordable Care Act Health Care Reform law. She was digging at the respected individual in an extremely rude and aggressive manner. I cannot remember her name, however she was white, blond, tan, and one sided in an ugly way. I cannot forget this woman as it was was not TV journalism in an acceptable manner. Sorry I do not know her name.
Piers Morgan is much the same way.

Case Information

Control ID : CIMS00003536932	IC Number : 12-WB15105169	Submission Method : Web	Status : Closed
Level One : Broadcast	Level Two : Programming Issues	Level Three : Content Criticism	Assigned Code Acronym : PCCR
Owner Rep Number : TSR42	Creator : cgb.475	Problem Submitted Time : 12/20/2012 5:13:07AM	Date Closed : 12/21/2012

Contact Information

Consumer Personal Information Omitted

City/State/ZipCode : KANSAS CITY MO 64111

Indecency

Date of Program : 6/22/12	Call Sign/Channel/Frequency : CNN Channel 44
Time of Program : 14:00	City/State of Program : Kansas City, MO
Network : Time Warner Cable	Program Type : Unknown
Name of Program/DJ/Personality/Song/Film : CNN news	

Problem Description

Awomand newscaster came on interviewing noteable people after the Supreme Court decision on the Affordable Care Act Health Care Reform law. She was digging at the respedted idividual in an extremely rude and aggressive manner. I cannot remember her name, however she was white, blond, tan, and one sided in an ugly way. I cannot forget this woman as it was was not TV journalism in an acceptable manner. Sorry I do not know her name.

Piers Morgan is much the same way.

Case Information

Control ID : CIMS00003534603	IC Number : 12-WB15104779	Submission Method : Web	Status : Closed
Level One : Broadcast	Level Two : Programming Issues	Level Three : Indecent	Assigned Code Acronym : INDE
Owner Rep Number : TSR42	Creator : cgb.475	Problem Submitted Time : 12/17/2012 10:24:21AM	Date Closed : 12/18/2012

Contact Information

Consumer Personal Information Omitted

City/State/ZipCode : HOUSTON TX 77004

Indecency

Date of Program : 12/16/2012	Call Sign/Channel/Frequency : 200
Time of Program : 10-11pm	City/State of Program : Houston, Tx
Network : CNN	Program Type : Cable/Satellite
Name of Program/DJ/Personality/Song/Film : Piers Morgan / Anderson Cooper	

Problem Description

Advertisement to call a phone number and get available young girls.
I'm sick of seeing these types of ads on television !
Especially during a broadcast a massacre of children!
Disgusting CNN!!!!!!'nnnn

Case Information

Control ID : CIMS00003437278	IC Number : 12-WB14997867	Submission Method : Web	Status : Closed
Level One : Broadcast	Level Two : Programming Issues	Level Three : Profane	Assigned Code Acronym : PROF
Owner Rep Number : TSR42	Creator : cgb.475	Problem Submitted Time : 7/12/2012 11:47:27AM	Date Closed : 7/18/2012

Contact Information

Consumer Personal Information Omitted

City/State/ZipCode : MINNETONKA MN 55345

Indecency

Date of Program : 07/11/2012 **Call Sign/Channel/Frequency :** 3
Time of Program : 08:00PM **City/State of Program :** Minnetonka, MN
Network : CNN **Program Type :** Cable/Satellite
Name of Program/DJ/Personality/Song/Film :
Piers Morgan

Case Referred

Case Referral Agency : FCC/Enforcement Bureau
Referral Division/Dept. : IHD - Investigation & Hearings
Referral Date : 7/18/2012
EB/IHD Exported Case : 7/24/2012

Problem Description

Pier Morgan interviewed Robert Blake. Most of the interview consisted of many swear words, which most were bleeped out EXCEPT they allowed "Goddamn" to be aired repeatedly.

I was highly offended and request you contact CNN and other networks to make certain that ALL swear words are filtered out. I don't want to have to buy a filter. Years ago the FCC was good at monitoring this for us. What happened? PLEASE demand that networks stop airing ALL swear words. Thank you.

Case Information

Control ID : CIMS00003412028	IC Number : 12-WB14984773	Submission Method : Web	Status : Closed
Level One : Broadcast	Level Two : Programming Issues	Level Three : Content Criticism	Assigned Code Acronym : PCCR
Owner Rep Number : TSR42	Creator : cgb.475	Problem Submitted Time : 6/4/2012 1:16:12PM	Date Closed : 6/5/2012

Contact Information

Consumer Personal Information Omitted

City/State/ZipCode : FLUSHING NY 11364

Indecency

Date of Program : 06/01/2012	Call Sign/Channel/Frequency : 78
Time of Program : 09:00	City/State of Program : FLUSHING, NY
Network : CNN	Program Type : Cable/Satellite
Name of Program/DJ/Personality/Song/Film : Piers Morgan	

Problem Description

Had a substitute host Bill Maher. He had a guest Seth McFarlane. Seth has a cartoon with a segment about Jesus. The cartoon asking Jesus for a miracle and the woman breast grew.

Case Information

Control ID : CIMS00003413240	IC Number : 12-WB14984773	Submission Method : Web	Status : Closed
Level One : Broadcast	Level Two : Programming Issues	Level Three : Content Criticism	Assigned Code Acronym : PCCR
Owner Rep Number : TSR29	Creator : cgb.475	Problem Submitted Time : 6/4/2012 1:16:12PM	Date Closed : 6/6/2012

Contact Information

Consumer Personal Information Omitted

City/State/ZipCode : FLUSHING NY 11364

Indecency

Date of Program : 06/01/2012 **Call Sign/Channel/Frequency :** 78
Time of Program : 09:00 **City/State of Program :** FLUSHING, NY
Network : CNN **Program Type :** Cable/Satellite
Name of Program/DJ/Personality/Song/Film :
Piers Morgan

Problem Description

Had a substitute host Bill Maher. He had a quest Seth McFarlane. Seth has a cartoon with a segment about Jesus. The cartoon asking Jesus for a miracle and the woman breast grew.